



## *Sunday Bulletin January 1, 2023* *Greek Orthodox Church of the* *Annunciation*

4121 O'Hara Drive Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: (607) 797-0824 Fax: (607) 797-0824  
<http://www.annunciationvestal.ny.goarch.org>

**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlantzis, Presiding Priest-  
Proistamenos**

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### **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. First Mode. Psalm 48.3,1.**

**My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart shall bring forth understanding.**

**Verse: Hear this all you nations.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 2:8-12**

BRETHREN, see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

### **Gospel Reading**      **Luke 2:20-21, 40-52**

At that time, the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him. After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

***Message from Fr. Michael.....***

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

As we will be celebrating today the New Year, the feast of St. Basil the Great, the Circumcision of the Lord, and on Friday, January 6th, the feast of our Lord's Holy Theophany, we reflect back at what everyone witnessed at the time of our Lord's Holy Theophany. Those who were on the banks of the Jordan River, witnessed the manifestation of the incarnation of our Lord. They witnessed our Savior as both Man and God. All righteousness was fulfilled when St. John baptized the Lord in the Jordan River. The water was so affected by the Lord's immersion that it caused itself to flow backwards.

This reverse flow of the Jordan has persisted since that time! The Blessed Holy Trinity was there for all to see. God the Father parted the Heavens as God the Son came out of the water. The voice of God the Father proclaimed "This is my Beloved Son of Whom I am well pleased." God the Holy Spirit appeared overhead in the form of a dove. Thus, the Triune God appeared to all. There was no doubt! There was no negotiation! Our God in His complete form was present! He was there for all to witness. We are sprinkled with the water of the Jordan, the very water which Baptized our Lord Jesus, for those of us who came to Church today on the feast of the Lord's Holy Theophany. We remember that during the Divine Liturgy, we sang, " For as many that are baptized in Christ, put on Christ! Alleluia." By being sprinkled with the Holy Water, the Aghiasmo, we essentially put Christ on ourselves.

In doing so, we give Glory to The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. We become one with the Lord! Today we enter into the Jordan River with Him and we pray that the sins that we carry will be thoroughly washed away.

We pray that the illumination cast by the upcoming celebration of the feast of the Lord's Theophany continues to shine on our path leading us to righteousness and to the grace of our Lord.

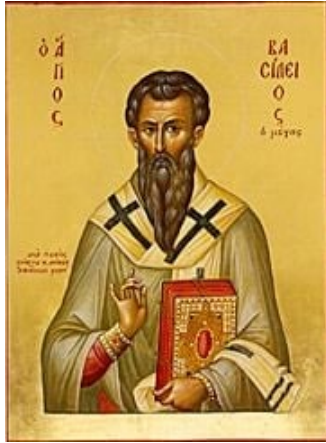
Prayerfully in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## Saints and Feasts Commemorated

### Peter the New Martyr of the Peloponnesos

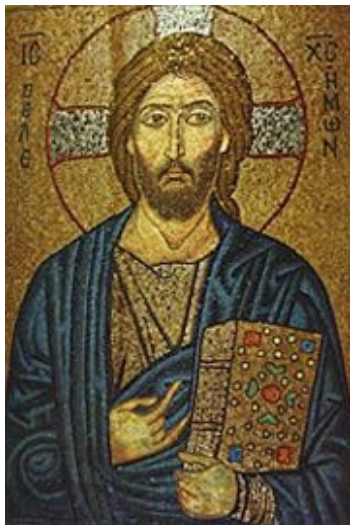
#### Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



Since the Mosaic Law commands that if a woman give birth to a male child, he should be circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh on the eighth day (Lev. 12:2-3), on this, the eighth day from His Nativity, our Saviour accepted the circumcision commanded by the Law. According to the command of the Angel, He received the Name which is above every name: JESUS, which means "Saviour" (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31 and 2:21).

### Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesaria in Cappadocia

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily (commemorated July 19) and his grandmother Macrina (Jan. 14) are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters: Macrina, his elder sister (July 19), Gregory of Nyssa (Jan. 10), Peter of Sebastia (Jan. 9), and Naucratius. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian." Through the good influence of his sister Macrina (see July 19), he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.



His writings are replete with wisdom and erudition, and rich are these gifts he set forth the doctrines concerning the mysteries both of the creation (see his Hexaemeron) and of the Holy Trinity (see On the Holy Spirit). Because of the majesty and keenness of his eloquence, he is honoured as "the revealer of heavenly things" and "the Great." Saint Basil is also celebrated on January 30th with Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Theodore Kermidas (son of John and Cassie), Ted Simon, Maria Lambrinos, Angelo Romas, Dino and Diamando Maniates, Mitry Ganim, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

### **SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR EARLY JANUARY 2023**

Friday, January 6th, 2023: Feast of Holy Theophany  
Orthros 8:45 am and Divine Liturgy 9:45 am. The Great Blessing of the Waters is to be celebrated at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on this day.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

The Ancient of Days, who in times past gave Moses the Law on Sinai, appears this day as a babe. As Maker of the Law He fulfills the Law, and according to the Law He is brought into the temple and given over to the Elder.

### **Anatolios**

Festal Menaion. Great Vespers.

The God of all goodness did not disdain to be circumcised. He offered Himself as a saving sign and example for us all. He fulfilled the words of the prophets concerning Himself. He holds the world in His hands, yet is bound in swaddling clothes. Let us glorify Him.

### **Vespers of the feast of the Lord's Circumcision**

Translation found in "The Winter Pascha" by Fr. Thomas Hopko SVS Press

*Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us.*